

BL 256
P 47
1916

308
595

MAN.

Viewed From Science and the Talmud.

By Rufus Lewis Perry.

11



HERE is a contradiction between Moses and certain modern scientists as to the origin of the material universe, but the scientific contradictions of Genesis are based on unsatisfactory hypothesis and inferences, and are, therefore, less trustworthy than that most ancient and blessed book, the Talmud, that gives a direct answer to the question that presents itself to every reflective man: "Whence is this great and wonderful universe of which I am a part?"

Moses does not undertake to prove that there is a God, unlike and greater than Jupiter-Ammon, or Osiris and Isis of the celebrated Ethiopians and wise Egyptian Cushites, but assumes it as an intuitive truth not to be questioned, and begins at once to tell, in terms sublime what God did "in the beginning." Here we find man, a treatise on whose place in nature is properly called Anthropology.

Man is an original conception of Deity, materialized and placed at the head of the Animal Kingdom, of which, and of the entire world his Creator made him monarch, excluding nothing on earth from his absolute dominion but his fellow man.

Darwinism and other Atheisticisms of modern science may find plausibility and set forth some truth when treating on subordinate animal and vegetable life, but they cannot reasonably dispute the facts of psychology peculiar to the genus homo. Darwin, Huxley, and others, have scientific disquisitions on "the origin of species" natural selection, or "survival

of the fittest," in support of the doctrine of evolution, but they have proved nothing more clearly than that "the fool hath said in his heart there is no God." Ps. 14:1. Or as David says to the chief musician on Neginoth: "Ye sons of men how long shall my glory become shame? Ye will love vanity and diligently seek after falsehood."

That there is a close alliance between mind and body, and laws more or less discoverable by the light of physical science, by which this alliance is maintained and regulated, no one of scientific knowledge and philosophic perception will positively deny; but that does not lessen the breadth and depth of the gulf in natural history between man and the next highest order of the animal kingdom. So, natural history will never find for Huxley the missing link that would connect his favorite monkey tribe with the God-like race of man.

Physical causes and final causes belong to two distinct spheres—one to the sphere of physics, the other to the far removed domain of metaphysics.

The fact that we find in man an universally acknowledged *basis* for sociological and psychological principia, for natural religion and consequent consciousness of moral accountability, removes him in nature as far from all other creatures of earth, as earth is from heaven, and heaven is from hell.

Man's material organism and that of the highest order of apes have some striking zoological resemblances; but the still more striking anatomical differences claim for man a genesis peculiar to himself; attesting the Mosaic statement that he is a creation and not an evolution from a protoplasm or nerve cell.

The fundamental ideas or notions of time, space and number, of church and state, of right and wrong, good and bad, of heaven and hell, are unthinkable by any terrestrial creature but the dualistic race of Adam; otherwise the Talmud is false, religion a fraud and moral science an imposition.

The bequest of
Daniel Murray,
Washington, D. C.
1925.

21 July 1972

The fact that the material substances of man and beast are the same in kind, never for a moment suggests to the chemist that man is a beast; then, why should the naturalist class man with the gorilla because of resemblances in zoological structure and functions? No scientist can make them bedfellows, for at this even the gorilla would protest and beg to be excused.

In studying the origin of man and his place in nature, the best text-book is the Talmud. There, in the original, is found four distinct words translated "man," and presenting as many different phases of his nature. They are Adam, Ish, Enosh and Geber.

These different terms are used by the inspired writers of blessed memory with noticeable precision to indicate man's nature, and the various respects in which he stands related to his Creator, his fellowman, and to physical nature.

The first word, "Adam," is used both as the proper name of the first man, and as a generic term like the Greek word "Anthropos," and the Latin word "Homo." Its etymological signification is said by some (the Rabbins) to be "the first red man," deriving it from a word that means red earth. The first letter, Aleph and Dum red. But a better and not over fanciful derivation of this Hebrew word is from one meaning "likeness," making it to signify "the first man in the likeness of God," that is, "the first Adam," in contradistinction to, and in, anticipation of the "second Adam," in both cases representing spiritual likeness of God, in whose image and likeness man was created.

Here we find a being with a soul; not like the instinct of the beasts, but a soul whose phenomena give rise to the profoundest thought in the domain of psychology, and of casuistry; where we contemplate rational personality, the real ego or self, and investigate as best we can our spiritual affinities and the laws of the soul's attraction.

The second word, Ish, is like the Greek 'Anar, and the Latin "vir," signifying a man as distinguished from

a woman, and implying dignity and power. It is the term used by Jeremiah (v. 1) where he says: "Run ye to and fro the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man." The same idea is expressed by Shakespeare:

"I dare do all that becomes a man:
Who dares do more is none."

The third term, Enosh, regards man as a mortal being, reminding him that he is constantly advancing towards the limit of his terrestrial pilgrimage, where soul and body will dissolve their union. The term suggests that man, wonderful as he is in constitution and faculties, must not become presumptuously proud; for that, the Gods will not tolerate, neither in the Pagan, Jew or Gentile. This is shown by the history of Lucifer; by the history of the proud Cushite Pharaoh that boastfully asked of Moses, "Who is God, that I should obey him," and by the fabled story in Roman history of Romulus Sylvius, who undertook to vie with Jupiter in making thunder, and was struck by lightning and hurled into Lake Albanus. Hence, 'tis better to say with Job: "Thou hath clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews; (x. 11) "I have said to corruption, "Thou art my father; and to the worm, Thou are my mother and my sister." (xvii. 14.)

The term Geber regards man as being strong, at the head, and having *dominion*; pointing, possibly to the rank given him "in the beginning" by his Creator.

PHYSICAL VARIATIONS.

Time, environment, and innate potentiality for differentiation in the laws of descent, which science has not been able satisfactorily to explain, have produced in man such physical variations as to originate different classes of men, distinguished by ethnologists as different races.

These variations are now so great in conspicuity that some infidel naturalists question man's common origin and advocate different creations or origins. This is almost,

if not quite, to question the wisdom and omnipotence of Deity.

Are any of such physical variations among men rationally preferable? Is any one of them extreme or intermediate, to be regarded by any branch or constituent element of society as a stigma? Jehovah forbid. The very ideas of nature, or nature's God creating or evolving a stigma in man's complexion, or otherwise, is absurd; the thought preposterous, and the expression akin to impious blasphemy.

Throughout the three great kingdoms of earth, there is variety in every genus; and if there were an exception in mankind, that exception would be more *remarkable* than is the conformity to the universal law of variety. The sameness of the human family, lies in the essential attributes of the genus, and the laws of development. Outside of these, there is conspicuous variety, constituting inimitable beauty.

MAN'S CAPACITY.

Des Cartes, the great French philosopher, after long and close thinking, in search of a solid foundation for his philosophy, found satisfactory assurance in the pregnant apothegm: "*Cogito; ergo sum*"—*I think; therefore I am*. This any man of sound mind may affirm of himself. This "*Cogito*" is a lever with which a man may lift himself to any height within a radius of human thoughts, and fly with the wings of imagination faster than lightning from place to place in the material universe.

The limit of man's cognitive powers is determined by and known only to his omniscient Creator, Jehovah. He can think on all things exterior to himself, and with equal ease can think on his own interior being, discover designs and observe the wonderful adaptation of means to end. His capacity for acquiring scientific and philosophic knowledge and applying it in useful arts, is indicative of the potentiality and mastery of his mind. He can calculate the distances, magnitude, density or specific

gravity, courses and velocity of the distant planets ; he can navigate the great seas, sail through the middle air, communicate with his Antipodes and beyond the oceans over electric wires ; and with telephone converse with friends a thousand miles away. In fine, he can do anything essential for his highest development, for his needs and his comfort on earth.

Possessed of such knowledge and such power, man is justly amenable to Jehovah and to society for their proper use or abuse.

To be a man, *rectus in curia*, is a higher favor than to be an angel ; for man, viewed according to his origin, nature and capacity, seems to be the next being below Jehovah within the range of human knowledge.

MAN'S SUBJECTION TO MORAL LAW.

All moral action is measured by the rule of perfection, at which point man attains his highest possible happiness. Such action is either upright, laudable and praiseworthy, or unrighteous and blameworthy ; but the sin of one's delinquency may be estimated according to the circumstances that attend and influence it.

Man is obligated to conduct himself with right behavior towards Jehovah, towards himself, and towards his neighbor. This obligation is *based* on the supposition of his free agency ; for where there is not freedom deliberately to act, one cannot be blamed and punished for wrong doing. Accountability for action can be justly demanded only where there is sufficient moral freedom. This is as clear and self-evident as any axiom of Euclid ; and on the consciousness of its truth rests the construction of moral philosophy. Man then is obligated to love and obey God as his absolute sovereign, full of mercy and love for him. It is here that arise the principles and claims of natural religion awakening in the heart the pleasant emotions of gratitude and benevolence.

He is obligated to regard the dignity of his manhood, love himself, develop himself by the use of proper means,

to exercise rulership over, and require of himself just what Jehovah requires of him.

He is obligated, because kindred to, associated with, and because required by his Creator, to love his neighbor in like manner as himself. Here arises the science of sociology; but it is designed now and here to point only to what grows immediately out of the relationship of man and fellow man, as the reciprocal fruit of a mutual benevolence springing from gratitude to Jehovah; for such gratitude in man shows itself in benevolence and rectitude, justice, candor, and uprightness towards his fellow man. This obligation is opposed to every species of slavery, and race hatred and prejudice, whether Negro, Jew or Gentile, and stands in deadly hostility to every form of abuse of life, liberty or property.

On the observance of these obligations, a discharge of these duties—depends happiness, progress and length of days; for no human institution, whether social, political or religious, not founded on truth and reared in righteousness, can stand against the convulsions and consequent mutations brought about by the inevitably conflict of right and wrong. This fact is well attested by history. Proud Babylon, arrogant Persia, unrivalled Egypt, philosophic Greece, imperial Rome, and, alas! poor Ethiopia, are all amongst the things that were, but are not, because they did not gird their loins with truth, and did not wear the breastplate of righteousness.

So the conclusion of this is, that beginning with physiology, biology and comparative anatomy, Anthropology requires light from all the other learned sciences—physical and ethical—foot lights, side lights, and head lights; that to this combined blaze of scientific light must be added the light of history and superadded the calcium light of divine revelation in order to see man as he is and is to be, on earth, and in heaven, in time and in eternity.

BL 256

.P47

1916

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
COLLECTION OF BOOKS
BY COLORED AUTHORS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00019656202

